



The Boyhood Crier

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Abraham Lincoln Honored; Nancy Hanks Lincoln Eulogized at Annual Lincoln Day

Clear skies and warmer temperatures were welcomed by those who attended the annual Lincoln Day program at Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial on Sunday, February 8. Those in attendance were treated to a special concert before the Lincoln Day ceremony by *The Company Singers*. The singing group from Champion Hill, Camp No. 17 of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War in Huntington County, Indiana delighted the audience with period songs from the 1860's. The formal Lincoln Day ceremony began at 2:00 p.m. (CST) with the Presentation of Colors and Pledge of Allegiance by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. The invocation was given by Rev. David Blystone of Santa Claus United Methodist Church. Remarks were given by Mrs. Evelyn Adams, President of the Lincoln Club of Southern Indiana and Lincoln Boyhood Superintendent, Randy Wester. The keynote address was given by Dr. James Madison of Indiana University. In his address, Dr. Madison reflected on the humble life of Abraham Lincoln and how his experience as an Indiana Hoosier would forever be with him. After Dr. Madison's address, Rev. Blystone gave the benediction and the Colors were retired by the Sons of Union Veterans. The indoor portion of the ceremony having concluded, it was time to make the annual pilgrimage to the gravesite of Nancy Hanks Lincoln for the wreath laying and eulogy. The procession to the grave was led by the Sons of Union Veterans. At the gravesite, Mr. Steve Sisley, President of the Spencer County Historical Society gave a very moving and eloquent eulogy for Nancy Hanks Lincoln. After the eulogy, several organizations gathered to place wreaths at the grave of the 16th President's mother. Afterward, the group returned to the Memorial Visitor Center for refreshments provided by the Lincoln Club of Southern Indiana.



Left: Dr. Madison delivers the keynote address in the Abraham Lincoln Hall.



Left: *The Company Singers* perform in the Abraham Lincoln Hall.

Below: Steve Sisley gives the eulogy at the gravesite of Nancy Hanks Lincoln.



Right: The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War lead the pilgrimage to the grave of Nancy Hanks Lincoln.



From the Superintendent....

On February 16th, Zane Blaise Thompson entered this world in the vicinity of our nation's capitol. He's a friend of mine. A fine baby boy born at 4:41 am and weighing in at 8 lbs, 11 oz., 21 inches long. At that particular time it was cloudy and Washington DC had a temperature of 20 degrees although it felt like 8. However, by 8:00 am the sun had broken through the clouds to shine on and welcome this new child. What a great way to celebrate Presidents Day. And the nice thing was that he arrived on a government holiday so his parents didn't have to take a day of vacation time to be with him. His parents work for the National Park Service. His father, Kendell, looks a bit like Abraham Lincoln in that he has dark hair and a dark beard. Other than that he's about a foot short and writes like an unpublished author. His mother, Mary, bears no resemblance at all to Abraham Lincoln, I'm happy to say. They share the ideals that the National Park Service cares for special places, saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage. They also share many of the same ideals as Abraham Lincoln. They, in turn, will share these with Zane.

I bring this up only because it reminded me that we are rapidly approaching the time of year when so many others of our world will be born, reborn, or just wake up from a long winter's sleep. This week we had a short burst of warm weather that makes us long for the days when we can shed the heavy winter clothing and stretch out for the gentle, warm breezes of spring. In fact, for some of us, it makes us downright greedy. While we just can't wait...we will. And the dormancy of winter will soon give way the lush, greenness that signals another beginning of new life.

At Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial we welcome the changes, the rebirth. It signals a new time for us and the excitement of abundant activity. Soon the Lincoln Living Historical Farm will open up as a classroom for the many school children that visit. Our staff will, once again, be the "teachers" and eagerly await the arrival of the many visitors that come to learn of the early years of Abraham Lincoln. We greet this time of year with great expectations.

If you are in the area we hope you will take a little time to visit your Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial and share this wonderful time of year with us.

We hope that someday Zane will visit as well. His parents are friends of mine and maybe he'll bring his parents. That's the way it happens sometimes.

Randy

Lead Park Ranger for Visitor Center Operations Leaving

Shane Lind, Lead Park Ranger for Visitor Center Operations has accepted a position at Buffalo National River in Northwest Arkansas. Shane will serve as District Interpreter for the Middle District of Buffalo National River. He will oversee the day to day operations of two visitor centers and will supervise the interpretive operations of the district. Buffalo River is one of the few remaining unpolluted, free-flowing rivers in the lower 48 states offering both swift-running and placid stretches. The river was designated a National River by Congress in 1972 and the park encompasses 135 miles of river. In addition to recreational activities such as canoeing and camping, the park offers a unique history of early settlers along the river and surrounding area. The park has nearly one million visitors annually.

Shane is a native of North Little Rock, Arkansas and a graduate of the University of Central Arkansas. Before coming to Lincoln Boyhood in July of 2000, he worked as a park ranger at Arkansas Post National Memorial in southern Arkansas and Fort Smith National Historic Site, also in Arkansas. Last summer, he was on a four month detail assignment to Central High School National Historic Site in Little Rock, Arkansas.

"I am very excited about going back to my home state. Buffalo National River is a very unique park with spectacular beauty and a fascinating history. I look forward to the opportunity and challenges that await me there." Shane also added, "Anytime you leave a park to go to another, there are always mixed feelings because of the friends you have made, and now have to leave. But at least in these modern times, it is easier to stay in touch."

Shane's last day at Lincoln Boyhood is March 21. He reports to duty at Buffalo National River on April 5.

Lincoln Trivia

1. What is the Date of Abraham Lincoln's Birthday?
2. In what month and year did Abraham and his family come to Indiana?
3. How old was Abraham when his mother died?
4. What month and year did Abraham Lincoln move with his family to Illinois?
5. How old was Abraham Lincoln when he married?
6. In what month and year did Abraham Lincoln take the Oath of Office to become the 16th President?
7. What National Holiday did Lincoln proclaim in 1863?
8. What was Abraham Lincoln's middle name?
9. How old was Abraham Lincoln when he died?

Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln

Stepmother of the 16th President

Abraham Lincoln's stepmother, Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln was born in Elizabethtown, Kentucky and came from a flourishing family. In March 1806, she married Daniel Johnston. Unfortunately, Johnston did not have the same kind of industriousness that his in-laws had and he was soon deeply in debt. When he died in 1816, Sarah was left with many of these obligations still outstanding. For the next several years she did her best to support herself and her three children. In 1819, Thomas Lincoln returned to Elizabethtown, a widower himself by this time, with hopes of finding a new wife and mother for his children. Having known Sarah before he moved to Indiana, and knowing she was a widow; he paid her a visit and asked her to marry him. Sarah replied that she could not marry him until she had paid her debts. Upon hearing this, Thomas agreed to pay the debts himself. Once that was done, he and Sarah were married on December 2, 1819. Sarah and her three children, John, Matilda, and Elizabeth returned with Thomas to Indiana, where Sarah set about making the two families into one. She found the country to be "wild and desolate" but the log cabin that Thomas had built was "good, tolerably comfortable." She soon discovered that her new stepson was very intelligent and had a passion for knowledge; he was especially fond of reading. Consequently, her gift to him of three books left an indelible impression on him.



Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln as she appeared later in life. Born December 13, 1788, she died on December 10, 1869, four years after her famous stepson.

Not only was it a priceless treasure to a boy who loved to read on a frontier where books were scarce, but it was an indication to him that Sarah would pick up where his mother had left off in terms of encouraging his quest for knowledge. The two quickly developed a close, intimate, mother-son relationship that would continue for the rest of Abraham's life. Even as an adult, Abraham remained close to his stepmother, whom he always referred to as "Mother." After the family moved to Illinois and he had gone out on his own he still found time to visit. Mrs. Lincoln reported that she "saw him every year or two." After the death of his father in 1851, Lincoln retained a 40-acre plot of land in his own name "for Mother while she lives," and otherwise tended to her welfare as best he could from a distance. Abraham saw his stepmother for the last time when he visited to bid her farewell before going to Washington for his inauguration. When she later recalled the visit after her stepson's death in 1865, she wept. Sarah died in 1869. Lincoln said of his stepmother "she proved to be a good and kind mother" to him. By all reports their relationship was excellent, and Mrs. Lincoln considered her stepson a model child who was always honest, witty, and "diligent for knowledge." He never needed a "cross word." In all the vast literature of controversy over Lincoln's early years, there is hardly an unkind word about Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln.

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U.S. Department of the Interior

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Farm Set to Open in April

The Living Historical Farm will open for the spring season on Sunday, April 18. The farm will be staffed Wednesday thru Sunday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. It will be closed on Mondays and Tuesdays until Memorial Day. After Memorial Day, the farm will be open 7 days a week until Labor Day. After Labor Day, it will again be open only 5 days, Wednesday thru Sunday. The farm will close for the season at the end of September.

The buildings will be open to the public and park employees dressed in period clothing will be giving tours and programs about life on the frontier. For more information, contact the park at (812)- 937-4541.





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Answers to Trivia Questions

This newsletter is brought to you by the staff of Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial.

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1. Abraham Lincoln was born Sunday, February 12, 1809 in Hardin County, Kentucky.
2. The Lincoln family moved to Indiana in December of 1816. This was also the year and month that Indiana became the 19th State to the Union.
3. Abraham Lincoln was 9 years old when his mother Nancy Hanks Lincoln died.
4. The Lincoln's moved to Illinois in March of 1830.
5. Abraham was 33 years old; his bride Mary Todd was 24. They were married on November 4, 1842.
6. Abraham Lincoln took the Oath of Office on March 4, 1861. At that time, Inauguration Day was held on March 4. That would change however in 1937, when Franklin Roosevelt was the first president to take the oath on January 20th, pursuant to the provisions of the 20th Amendment to the Constitution.
7. In October of 1863, Lincoln signed a Presidential Proclamation making the last Thursday of November a National Day of Thanksgiving. In 1941, Congress changed the date to the fourth Thursday in November.
8. Abraham Lincoln did not have a middle name.
9. Abraham Lincoln was 56 when he was shot and killed at Fords Theatre on April 14, 1865 by John Wilkes Booth.